

House File 2268 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 2268
BY RAECKER

A BILL FOR

- 1 An Act relating to the establishment of frontier schools.
- 2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 256F.14 Frontier schools.

2 1. The board of directors of a school district, the
3 administrators of an accredited nonpublic school, the board of
4 directors of a community college, the state board of regents,
5 an accredited private institution as defined in section 261.9,
6 or a private nonprofit corporation organized under chapter 504
7 may submit an application to the state board to establish a
8 frontier school. The state board shall adopt rules specifying
9 the criteria for approval of frontier schools. The department
10 shall develop an application process. The applicant shall
11 specify in its application all of the following:

12 a. Mission and instructional focus of the school.

13 b. Organizational structure and management of the school.

14 c. Impact of labor agreements and contracts on the success
15 of the school.

16 d. Roles and responsibilities of all involved
17 constituencies.

18 e. Arrangements for special needs students.

19 f. Connection of the school to the school district.

20 g. Facility and operation costs.

21 h. Methods for measuring results, including but not limited
22 to student achievement results.

23 2. For purposes of this section, "*frontier school*" means a
24 school that is nonsectarian in its program, admission policies,
25 employment practices, and all other operations. The school is
26 a public school and is part of the state's system of public
27 education. The primary focus of a frontier school shall be to
28 provide a comprehensive program of instruction for at least one
29 grade or age group from five through eighteen years of age.
30 Frontier schools may be designed to allow significant autonomy
31 to the schools. However, frontier schools shall be accountable
32 for significant results.

33 3. Except as provided in this subsection, frontier schools
34 are exempt from all statutes and rules applicable to a school,
35 a school board, or a school district, although a frontier

1 school may elect to comply with one or more provisions of
2 statute or rule. However, a frontier school shall meet all
3 applicable state and local health and safety requirements; a
4 frontier school shall be organized and operated as a nonprofit
5 corporation under chapter 504; the provisions of chapters
6 21 and 22 shall apply to meetings and records of a frontier
7 school board; and a frontier school is subject to and shall
8 comply with chapters 216 and 216A relating to civil and human
9 rights, and sections 275.55A, 279.9A, 280.17B, 280.21B, and
10 282.4, relating to suspension and expulsion of a student.
11 The frontier school shall employ or contract with necessary
12 teachers, as defined in section 272.1, who hold a valid license
13 with an endorsement for the type of service for which the
14 teacher is employed. Frontier schools are subject to the same
15 financial audits, audit procedures, and audit requirements as
16 a school district. The audits shall be consistent with the
17 requirements of sections 11.6, 11.14, 11.19, 256.9, subsection
18 19, and section 279.29, except to the extent deviations
19 are necessary because of the program at the school. The
20 department, auditor of state, or the legislative services
21 agency may conduct financial, program, or compliance audits.
22 The provisions of chapter 20 shall not apply to the board of
23 directors of a frontier school or its employees.

24 4. A student enrolled in a frontier school shall be counted,
25 for state school foundation aid purposes, in the student's
26 district of residence. A student's residence, for purposes
27 of this section, means a residence under section 282.1. The
28 board of directors of the district of residence shall pay to
29 the frontier school the state cost per pupil for the previous
30 school year, plus any moneys received for the student as a
31 result of the non-English speaking weighting under section
32 280.4, subsection 3, for the previous school year multiplied by
33 the state cost per pupil for the previous year.

34

EXPLANATION

35 This bill provides for the establishment of frontier

1 schools by any of the following: school districts, accredited
2 nonpublic schools, public and private accredited postsecondary
3 institutions, and private nonprofit corporations. The bill
4 requires the entities to apply to the state board of education,
5 directs the state board to specify criteria for the approval
6 of frontier schools, directs the department of education
7 to develop an application process, and specifies what the
8 applicant must include in the application.

9 The bill defines a frontier school as nonsectarian in its
10 program, admission policies, employment practices, and all
11 other operations. The school is a public school and is part
12 of the state's system of public education. The primary focus
13 of a frontier school is to provide a comprehensive program of
14 instruction for at least one grade or age group from 5-18 years
15 of age. Frontier schools may be designed to allow significant
16 autonomy to the schools. However, frontier schools shall be
17 accountable for significant results.

18 Frontier schools are exempt from all statutes and rules
19 applicable to a school, a school board, or a school district,
20 except as specified in the bill. A frontier school may elect
21 to comply with one or more provisions of statute or rule.
22 A frontier school must meet all applicable state and local
23 health and safety requirements; be organized and operated as
24 a nonprofit corporation; comply with the open meetings and
25 records laws; comply with civil and human rights laws; comply
26 with Code provisions related to suspension and expulsion of
27 a student; and employ or contract with necessary teachers
28 who hold a valid license with an endorsement for the type of
29 service for which the teacher is employed. Frontier schools
30 are subject to the same financial audits, procedures, and
31 requirements as a school district, except to the extent
32 deviations are necessary because of the program at the school.
33 The provisions of Code chapter 20 relating to collective
34 bargaining shall not apply to the board of directors of a
35 frontier school or its employees.

H.F. 2268

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2 for state school foundation aid purposes, in the student's
3 district of residence. The district of residence shall pay to
4 the frontier school the state cost per pupil for the previous
5 school year, plus any moneys received for the student as a
6 result of the non-English speaking weighting for the previous
7 school year multiplied by the state cost per pupil for the
8 previous year.